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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-first session

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

(Item 4 (a))

Section 19. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. At its 19th meeting on 22 June 2001, the Committee considered section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the work and activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). It was observed that the programme of work was in line with the priorities and needs of the region, such as the reduction of poverty and accelerated economic development.

4. The view was expressed that, while most indicators of achievements were consistent with those approved for programme 17 of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005, some indicators required a closer alignment with those in the plan. It was considered that in time the indicators of achievement cited under the

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programme would be improved. In that connection it was stated that performance indicator (d) in table 19.19, "overall attendance goal of at least 40 per cent of women", was very good since it provided a well-defined target which could be measured. Regarding performance indicator (a) in table 19.7, the view was expressed that the scope of that indicator should be expanded and not constrained only to negotiations on a Free Trade Area of the Americas, since ECLAC activities should benefit all countries of the region. Concern was expressed about the implications in the wording of some of the external factors; it was felt that the expected accomplishments would be solely dependent on the actions of Member States of the region. In that regard it was considered that some of the external factors required improvement.

5. It was stated that ECLAC should be commended for the level of detail and apparent transparency of the outputs enumerated in the narrative of the section. Appreciation was expressed for the institutional reforms carried out by ECLAC.

6. It was considered that ECLAC should increase efforts to ensure that consultants and experts are recruited from a greater number of countries of the region.

7. The view was expressed that future budget resources should provide for the strengthening of subprogrammes 4 and 7. It was further indicated that since the 1990s, one of the goals of ECLAC had been to strengthen the areas of work covered by subprogramme 3, Macroeconomic policies and growth, and subprogramme 7, Planning of public administration. It was therefore considered that the technical expertise required under those subprogrammes should be reinforced. The achievements under subprogramme 10, Statistics and economic projections, an area in which ECLAC had developed significant comparative advantage, were highlighted.

8. Concern was expressed with regard to the negative impact that the lower level of extrabudgetary resources projected for the biennium 2002-2003 would have on the programme of work.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, subject to the following modifications:

Table 19.7

In performance indicator (a), delete the phrase "in particular with respect to the ongoing negotiations on a Free Trade Area of the Americas".

Table 19.19

In expected accomplishment (b), delete the phrase "democratic governance".

Table 19.21

Expected accomplishment (b) should read:

"Increased technical capacity to incorporate an environmental dimension into the design of economic policies and the innovative use of economic instruments in environmental management, including a better understanding of the uneven effects of such policies on men and women."